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## Road map towards the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017

*Summary*

This document is presented in response to Executive Board decision 2011/12 and outlines a road map, as a living document, for the formulation of the next UNICEF medium-term strategic plan (MTSP). The paper sets out a series of steps relating to the remainder of the current plan period and to the development of the next strategic plan for 2014-2017, which will be presented to the Executive Board for approval at the second regular session of 2013. The paper also indicates how this work is linked with the evolution of the integrated budget.

* E/ICEF/2012/1.

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# I. Background

1. The MTSP provides a guiding framework for the work of UNICEF, including its country programmes of cooperation, global advocacy and operations. The current MTSP[1] was developed in consultation with the Executive Board in the context of the Millennium Declaration and associated Millennium Development Goals, and was approved by the Executive Board in September 2005. Originally covering the period 2006-2009, the MTSP was twice extended by the Executive Board, through its decisions 2008/14 and 2009/5, and now covers the period until the end of 2013.

2. Two in-depth reviews have been undertaken of the extended MTSP, and these were reported to the Executive Board in 2008, in document E/ICEF/2008/18 (the midterm review), and in 2010, in document E/ICEF/2010/9 (the in-depth review). These exercises enabled the organization and the Executive Board to identify emerging lessons in implementation and external trends, as a basis for making strategic and specific adjustments to key elements of the plan.

3. The MTSP contains the following key components:

(a) Context and guiding principles;

(b) Focus areas, including strategies, key results and targets;

(c) Supporting and cross-cutting strategies;

(d) Management and operations;

(e) Resource implications and the financial medium-term plan;

(f) Results matrix (detailing the key result areas, organizational targets and associated indicators);

(g) Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (including global monitoring, evaluation and research and key performance indicators for the MTSP).

4. Each of these components has been updated during the plan period, particularly through the use of the findings of the 2008 midterm review and the 2010 in-depth review. Documentation on the updates of the results matrix and the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, including the key performance indicators, has been provided to the Executive Board (see documents E/ICEF/2008/19 and E/ICEF/2010/10). The financial medium-term plan estimates are updated annually.

5. Reporting on the MTSP has been provided primarily through the successive annual reports of the Executive Director, supplemented by a detailed Data Companion, containing data and analysing trends on the MTSP indicators, and other, related documentation.

[1] "The UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2009 — Investing in children: the UNICEF contribution to poverty reduction and the Millennium Summit agenda" (E/ICEF/2005/11) 11 July 2005.

## II. Context for the development of the next medium-term strategic plan, 2014-2017

6. The next MTSP will be formulated, in particular, in response to the emerging findings and final outcomes of the process of the 2012-2013 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. These will be reflected and integrated into the next plan at all stages of its development.

7. The plan will take account of and reflect the outcomes of major intergovernmental conferences and deliberations, including the Fourth Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One, in Montevideo (2011); the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Busan, Republic of Korea (2011); and the Rio+20 Conference on sustainable development (2012). UNICEF will focus particularly on its strategic positioning so that, on the basis of its mandate and mission for the rights and well-being of children, the organization may contribute to the emerging agenda of priorities for the "post-2015" framework for development.

8. The plan will also incorporate commitments under related and relevant international agreements and programmes of action, including the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the Almaty Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries, and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

9. The plan will be based on analysis of the situation of children across regions and country conditions, including major disparities and the factors underlying them. Its aims will be the following: address the major challenges and risks faced by the most vulnerable children, adolescents, women and families in the coming period, including the risks posed by environmental and economic trends; and take advantage of major opportunities and new modalities, including South-South and triangular cooperation, and both existing and emerging sources for sustained social investments to benefit children and to protect and promote their rights.

10. The new MTSP will strongly reflect the strategic re-focus of UNICEF on equitable outcomes and the most disadvantaged children, families and groups. The equity re-focus has been adopted as a strategy to achieve accelerated and sustained results for children in relation to development goals, based on and consistent with the MTSP foundation strategies of the human rights-based approach to cooperation and gender equality. Strategic result areas within the present MTSP results matrix have been identified for intensified monitoring, on a pilot basis beginning in 2012, as a means of working with national partners to promote accelerated results for disadvantaged children and families.

11. The formulation of the new plan will be informed by lessons learned from reviews and by the findings of recent evaluations, including those of organizational performance, the foundation strategies of the MTSP, cross-cutting themes and humanitarian response. It will address critical and emerging issues, including the contributions and leadership roles of UNICEF in United Nations system-wide coherence, the future roles of UNICEF in cooperation and advocacy in middle-income countries, in fragile and transition situations and in support of national capacity development for the rights of children.

12. The plan will further reflect the centrality of strengthening the results focus and efficient and effective management of the operations of UNICEF, including the enhancement of results-based management and reporting. This involves the use of intensified field monitoring approaches and a clear and comprehensive narrative of organizational contributions to equitable results on behalf of children's rights; improved articulation and disaggregation of results, indicators and baselines for monitoring and strategic management; and enhanced organizational performance and risk assessment and analysis.

## III. MTSP consultation process

13. The consultation process for the new MTSP will draw on the experience from 2005 in formulating the present MTSP. As before, the process will incorporate a series of interactive discussions and consultations. These have already begun and will continue through the period prior to submission of the new plan at the second regular session of 2013. The discussions and consultations will continue to take place through informal sessions with Executive Board members, dialogue with United Nations sister agencies (including especially close coordination with the strategic planning activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and others), and interaction with development and humanitarian experts, major non-governmental organization partners and National Committees for UNICEF.

14. Views on the strategic and priority roles of UNICEF in different contexts, including humanitarian situations, low-income countries and LDCs, middle-income countries and the industrialized world, and in relation to major emerging trends facing children and women, will be sought through these consultations and through structured questionnaires sent to key stakeholders, including all Member States.

15. UNICEF will also draw on the experience and perspectives of its regional and country offices in the final review of the present plan and the development of the next one. Consultations will be held through established mechanisms such as the regional and global management teams, beginning in the first half of 2012, while the contributions of UNICEF staff at all levels will be facilitated through online portals and surveys, as well as other opportunities.

## IV. MTSP formulation process

16. The process of formulating the next MTSP will begin with the end-of-cycle review of the current MTSP for 2006-2013, including the key lessons learned. This will enable UNICEF to draw on lessons learned from implementation of the current plan, the thematic discussions held with the Executive Board on each of the five focus areas, and the most current strategic directions emerging for the work of the organization. A combined end-of-cycle review report and proposed outline of the next MTSP will be presented to the Executive Board for discussion at the first regular session of 2013. The proposed outline will include a description of the key issues to be addressed for children in 2014-2017, the programmatic focus (including an outline of the proposed focus areas and key results) and a summary of the major strategies and operational management issues for the coming plan period.

17. The complete draft of the new MTSP, including the draft results framework and Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, will be presented to the Executive Board for discussion at the annual session of 2013. Based on this discussion, the final version will be submitted for approval at the second regular session of 2013.

18. In order to prepare for the final review of the current MTSP, the current results matrices and the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, including the key performance indicators, will be updated for the period 2012-2013 and made available to Executive Board members in early 2012. Adjustments to the results framework in particular will reflect the organization's intensified focus on equitable outcomes and the pilot efforts to enhance the monitoring of bottlenecks and barriers facing disadvantaged children and groups in a subset of strategic result areas.

## V. Linkage of plan and budget preparation

19. At the second regular session of 2012, a report jointly prepared by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA will be presented on steps taken and progress made in preparing an integrated budget for 2014-2015. The report will include a mock-up of the integrated budget and a review of the impact of harmonized cost classifications on existing cost recovery policies. Based on the feedback from the members of the Executive Board in the discussion on the mock-up of the integrated budget and tables, the relevant budget tables of the MTSP for 2014-2017 will be prepared. Further, informal discussions will be held in the first half of 2013 to align the resource framework with the results to be proposed in both the strategic plan and the integrated budget that will be presented to the Executive Board at the second regular session of 2013 for review and approval.

## Annex

### Timetable towards the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017

| *Date* | *Issue/Topic*[1] |
|---|---|
| First regular session 2011 | Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) focus area 2: Basic education and gender equality |
| Annual session 2011 | Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 (E/ICEF/2011/9) and Data Companion |
| | Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus area 4: Child protection from violence, exploitation and abuse (E/ICEF/2011/CRP.15) |
| Second regular session 2011 | Institutional budget for 2012-2013(E/ICEF/2011/AB/L.2) |
| | Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus area 1: Young child survival and development (E/ICEF/2011/CRP.24) |
| November 2011-January 2012 | *Informal consultation* on the UNICEF annual report to the Economic and Social Council (E/ICEF/2012/3) |
| | *Informal consultation* on the thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus area 3: HIV/AIDS and children |
| First regular session 2012 | Road map towards the medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017 (E/ICEF/2012/5) |
| | Updated results matrices and updated Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 (to be posted on the UNICEF Executive Board website) |
| | Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus area 3: HIV/AIDS and children |
| February 2012-May 2012 | *Informal consultation* on the annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 |
| | *Informal consultation* on the thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus |

| *Date* | *Issue/Topic*[1] |
|---|---|
| | area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights |
| Annual session 2012 | Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 and Data Companion |
| | Thematic discussion on results and lessons learned in the MTSP focus area 5: Policy advocacy and partnerships for children's rights |
| Second regular session 2012 | Report, jointly prepared and presented by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA, on steps taken and progress made in preparing an integrated budget for 2014-2015. Report to include a mock-up of the integrated budget and the impact of harmonized cost classifications on existing cost recovery policies |
| June 2012-December 2012 | UNICEF engagement in the process for the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) and related issues |
| October 2012-April 2013 | Informal consultations:<br>• End-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013<br>• Outline, structure and strategic focus of the MTSP for 2014-2017<br>• Further refining of the strategic focus of the MTSP for 2014-2017, taking into consideration the emerging recommendations of the QCPR; findings of the end-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013; the Fourth Intergovernmental Conference on Delivering as One, in Montevideo, 2011; the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, in Busan, Republic of Korea; the Rio+20 Conference on sustainable development, 2012; and the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda, etc. |

| *Date* | *Issue/Topic*[1] |
|---|---|
| | • Alignment of the MTSP and the integrated budget regarding the resource plan, results frameworks, and linking of resources to results |
| First regular session 2013 | Combined end-of-cycle review of the MTSP for 2006-2013 and outline of the MTSP for 2014-2017 for review, discussion and comments by the members of the Executive Board |
| | Annual report to the Economic and Social Council |
| Annual session 2013 | Annual report of the Executive Director on progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan for 2006-2013 |
| | Draft MTSP for 2014-2017:UNICEF to present the draft, including implications of the QCPR, for review, feedback and discussion by Executive Board members. Based on the formal discussion and any follow-up actions requested by the Executive Board, UNICEF will finalize the strategic plan for submission to the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2013 |
| May-August 2013 | *Informal consultations* on the integrated budget for 2014-2015, in support of delivery of the strategic plan |
| Second regular session 2013 | Medium-term strategic plan for 2014-2017 and the results matrices for the plan: UNICEF to present the plan to the Executive Board for approval, with implementation to commence on 1 January 2014 |
| | Integrated budget for 2014-2015, to commence on 1 January 2014: UNICEF to present to the Executive Board for approval the integrated budget that underpins the new MTSP |

[1] Presentations to the Executive Board of the items listed for the first, annual and regular sessions of 2011 were preceded by informal consultations.